

With the goal of improving coordination and communication with problem solving courts in the state of Washington, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Behavioral and Health and Recovery Services (DBHR), have agreed to work in partnership to create a directory of problem solving courts. The first step in creating this directory is to develop an inventory of the various types of problem solving courts operated by county or municipal governments. AOC and DBHR offer the following list of problem solving courts with descriptions as a framework.

Descriptions of Problem Solving Courts

Adult Drug Court ⁽¹⁾

A specially designed court calendar or docket, the purposes of which are to achieve a reduction in recidivism and substance abuse among nonviolent substance abusing offenders and to increase the offender's likelihood of successful habilitation through early, continuous, and intense judicially supervised treatment, mandatory periodic drug testing, community supervision, and use of appropriate sanctions and other rehabilitation services (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2005).

Veterans Treatment Court ⁽¹⁾

Drug Courts around the country have seen rising numbers of veterans in their programs and sought to offer specialized services to address their unique needs. The Veterans Treatment Court model use veterans as mentors to help defendants engage in treatment and counseling as well as partner with local Veterans Affairs offices to ensure that participants receive proper benefits. Veterans Treatment Courts have garnered national media attention and widespread interest in the Drug Court field. There are currently over thirty states looking to implement a Veterans Treatment Court with many more sure to follow.

DWI Court ⁽¹⁾

A DWI court is a distinct post-conviction court system dedicated to changing the behavior of the alcohol-dependent repeat offender arrested for driving while impaired (DWI). The goal of the DWI court is to protect public safety by using the drug court model to address the root cause of impaired driving: alcohol and other drugs of abuse. Variants of DWI courts include drug courts that also take DWI offenders, which are commonly referred to as "hybrid" DWI courts or DWI/drug courts. (Loeffler & Huddleston, 2003). DWI courts often enhance their close monitoring of offenders using home and field visits, as well as technological innovations such as Ignition Interlock devices and the SCRAM transdermal alcohol detection device (Harberts & Waters, 2006).

Family Dependency Treatment Court (Family Drug Court) ⁽¹⁾

Family dependency treatment court is a juvenile or family court docket of which selected abuse, neglect, and dependency cases are identified where parental substance abuse is a primary factor. Judges, attorneys, child protection services, and treatment personnel unite with the goal of providing safe, nurturing, and permanent homes for children while simultaneously providing parents the necessary support and services to become drug and alcohol abstinent. Family dependency treatment courts aid

parents in regaining control of their lives and promote long-term stabilized recovery to enhance the possibility of family reunification within mandatory legal timeframes (Wheeler & Siegerist, 2003).

Federal District Drug Court (Federal Reentry Court) ⁽¹⁾

Federal district drug court is a post-adjudication, cooperative effort of the Court, Probation, Federal Public Defenders, and U.S. Attorneys' Offices to provide a blend of treatment and sanction alternatives to address behavior, rehabilitation and community re-integration for non-violent, substance-abusing offenders. These courts typically incorporate an early-discharge program designed to replace the final year of incarceration with strictly-supervised release into the drug court regimen. The Federal programs incorporate the Ten Key Components in a voluntary, but contractual, program of intense supervision and drug testing lasting a minimum of 12–18 months.

Juvenile Drug Court ⁽¹⁾

A juvenile drug court is a docket within a juvenile court to which selected delinquency cases, and in some instances status offenders, are referred for handling by a designated judge. The youth referred to this docket are identified as having problems with alcohol and/or other drugs... Over the course of a year or more, the team meets frequently (often weekly), determining how best to address the substance abuse and related problems of the youth and his or her family that have brought the youth into contact with the justice system. (National Drug Court Institute & National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 2003, p. 7).

Reentry Drug Court ⁽¹⁾

Reentry drug courts utilize the drug court model, as defined in The Key Components, to facilitate the reintegration of drug-involved offenders into communities upon their release from local or state correctional facilities. Reentry drug court participants are provided with specialized ancillary services needed for successful reentry into the community. These are distinct from reentry courts, which do not utilize the drug court model, but work with a similar population (Tauber & Huddleston, 1999).

Tribal Healing to Wellness Court ⁽¹⁾

A Tribal Healing to Wellness Court is a component of the tribal justice system that incorporates and adapts the wellness concept to meet the specific substance abuse needs of each tribal community (Tribal Law & Policy Institute, 2003). The tribal healing to wellness court team includes not only tribal judges, advocates, prosecutors, police officers, educators, and substance abuse and mental health professionals, but also tribal elders and traditional healers. "The concept borrows from traditional problem-solving methods utilized since time immemorial...[and] utilizes the unique strengths and history of each tribe" (Native American Alliance Foundation).

Back on TRAC: Treatment, Responsibility, Accountability on Campus ⁽¹⁾

The Back on TRAC clinical justice model adopts the integrated public health-public safety principles and components of the successful Drug Court model and applies them to the college environment. It targets college students whose excessive use of substances has continued despite higher education's best

efforts at education, prevention, or treatment and has ultimately created serious consequences for themselves or others. Back on TRAC operates within the confines of existing resources and without interrupting the student's educational process. It unites campus leaders, student development practitioners, treatment providers, and health professionals with their governmental, judicial, and treatment counterparts in the surrounding community. (Monchick & Gehring, 2006).

Mental Health Court ⁽²⁾

Modeled after drug courts and developed in response to the overrepresentation of people with mental illnesses in the criminal justice system, mental health courts divert select defendants with mental illnesses into judicially supervised, community-based treatment. Currently, all mental health courts are voluntary. Defendants are invited to participate in the mental health court following a specialized screening and assessment, and they may choose to decline participation. For those who agree to the terms and conditions of community-based supervision, a team of court staff and mental health professionals works together to develop treatment plans and supervise participants in the community. (Council of State Governments, 2005).

Community Court ⁽²⁾

Community courts bring the court and community closer by locating the court within the community where “quality of life crimes” are committed (e.g., petty theft, turnstile jumping, vandalism, etc.). With community boards and the local police as partners, community courts have the bifurcated goal of solving the problems of defendants appearing before the court, while using the leverage of the court to encourage offenders to “give back” to the community in compensation for damage they and others have caused (Lee, 2000).

Domestic Violence Court ⁽²⁾

A felony domestic violence court is designed to address traditional problems of domestic violence such as low reports, withdrawn charges, threats to victim, lack of defendant accountability, and high recidivism, by intense judicial scrutiny of the defendant and close cooperation between the judiciary and social services. A permanent judge works with the prosecution, assigned victim advocates, social services, and the defense to ensure physical separation between the victim and all forms of intimidation from the defendant or defendant’s family throughout the entirety of the judicial process; provide the victim with the housing and job training needed to begin an independent existence from the offender (Mazur and Aldrich, 2003); and continuously monitor the defendant in terms of compliance with protective orders and substance abuse treatment (Winick, 2000). Additionally, a case manager ascertains the victim’s needs and monitors cooperation by the defendant, and close collaboration with defense counsel ensures compliance with due process safeguards and protects defendant’s rights. Variants include the misdemeanor domestic violence court which handles larger volumes of cases and is designed to combat the progressive nature of the crime to preempt later felonies, and the integrated domestic violence court in which a single judge handles all judicial aspects relating to one family, including criminal cases, protective orders, custody, visitation, and even divorce (Mazur and Aldrich, 2003).

Gambling Court ⁽²⁾

Operating under the same protocols and guidelines utilized within the drug court model, gambling courts intervene in a therapeutic fashion as a result of pending criminal charges with those individuals who are suffering from a pathological or compulsive gambling disorder. Participants enroll in a contract-based, judicially supervised gambling recovery program and are exposed to an array of services including Gamblers Anonymous (GA), extensive psychotherapeutic intervention, debt counseling, group and one-on-one counseling participation and, if necessary, drug or alcohol treatment within a drug court setting. Participation by family members or significant others is encouraged through direct participation in counseling with offenders and the availability of support programs such as GAM-ANON (M. Farrell, personal communication, April 7, 2005).

Truancy Court ⁽²⁾

Rather than take the traditional punitive approach to truancy, truancy courts assist in overcoming the underlying causes of truancy in a child's life by reinforcing education through efforts from the school, courts, mental health providers, families, and the community. Guidance counselors submit reports on the child's weekly progress throughout the school year that the court uses to enable special testing, counseling, or other necessary services as required. Truancy court is often held on the school grounds and results in the ultimate dismissal of truancy petitions if the child can be helped to attend school regularly (National Truancy Prevention Association, 2005). Many courts have reorganized to form special truancy court dockets within the juvenile or family court. Consolidation of truancy cases results in speedier court dates and more consistent sentencing, and makes court personnel more attuned to the needs of truant youth and their families (National Center for School Engagement).

Homeless Court

The National Drug Court Professionals website does not list a definition of a "Homeless courts." For the purpose of this survey a "Homeless Court" is a special court session held in a local shelter or other community site designed for homeless citizens to resolve outstanding misdemeanor criminal warrants (principally "quality-of-life" infractions such as unauthorized removal of a shopping cart, disorderly conduct, public drunkenness, and sleeping on a sidewalk or on the beach). Resolution of outstanding warrants not only meets a fundamental need of homeless people but also eases court case-processing backlogs and reduces vagrancy.

⁽¹⁾ As defined by National Drug Court Professionals at <http://www.nadcp.org/learn/what-are-drug-courts/models>

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Since this a joint AOC and DBHR project please feel free to contact either agency if you have questions. The contacts for each agency are:

- For AOC –Jennifer Zipoy, 360-704-4142 or by email at jennifer.zipoy@courts.wa.gov
- For DBHR – Earl Long, 360-725-9985 or by email at earl.long@dshs.wa.gov.